IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FOR THE DISTRICT OF UTAH

CENTRAL DIVISION

In re:

JESSE C. TRENTADUE,

Plaintiff,

V.

Case No. 2:08-CV-788CW

UNITED STATES CENTRAL
INTELLIGENCE AGENCY,

Defendant.

Final Pretrial Conference

BEFORE THE HONORABLE CLARK WADDOUPS

July 15, 2014

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Programs Branch

20 Massachusetts Ave NW 7124

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Salt Lake City, Utah, Tuesday, July 15, 2014 1 2 THE COURT: Good morning. We're here in the 3 matter of Trentadue v. FBI, 2:08-cv-788. Will the 4 5 parties please state their appearance. MR. TRENTADUE: Yes, Your Honor, Jesse 6 7 Trentadue, pro se. 8 THE COURT: Thank you. 9 MS. WYER: Good morning Your Honor. Kathryn Wyer for the FBI. And you may have noticed that I have 10 11 a co-counsel who has recently appeared and he had 12 intended to attend today, but he is having flight 13 delays, so he may show up later. THE COURT: Thank you. I did notice he 14 15 entered a pro hac admission in this case. Today is scheduled for a final pretrial 16 17 conference. It seems to me that the first thing to 18 discuss is entrance of the joint pretrial order which has been submitted. In reviewing that it appears to me 19 20 that the order as submitted is appropriate with a couple 2.1 of exceptions. The first exception is the paragraph --22 let me get the right page, page 9, paragraph 5, which 23 refers to civil contempt. And I think, as I discussed 24 last time, we're not going to try civil contempt. 25 would propose to simply cross that out and initial it.

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And the other change is similar, which is on page 13,
which also is the paragraph that refers to civil
contempt. So what I would intend to do is just cross
those two paragraphs out and initial the document. Any
other changes to the proposed joint final pretrial order
that ought to be addressed before I sign it?
            MR. TRENTADUE: No, sir.
            THE COURT: From the FBI?
            MS. WYER: Your Honor, just the pretrial
order contains many disputes over the positions. Are
those going to be resolved before --
            THE COURT:
                        They will be resolved at the
trial, but I think those state the issues that are going
to be addressed at trial.
            MS. WYER: Okay.
            THE COURT: Okay. So with that, I will
sign -- those changes I will sign the pretrial order.
And there are a number of issues in which both of you
state your positions, but it seems to me that the
evidence and the arguments at trial will be important to
resolve those.
            The second issue that we have is the -- find
it here -- the plaintiff's response to the defendant's
Rule 43(a) ruling, an objection -- well, I have the
objections of the United States to the 43(a) appearance
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and then the plaintiff's response to the 43(a) ruling. 1 2 Is there anything further that needs to be heard on that before we proceed to trial? 3 MR. TRENTADUE: Yes, Your Honor. We've also 4 moved to include Mr. John Matthews as being allowed to 5 6 testify by video conferencing. Mr. Matthews is beyond 7 the subpoena power. And I think when you look at the 8 case law that the government relies upon it doesn't 9 really support the position they are taking with respect to video conferencing because it's become a state of the 10 11 art, especially in this courthouse. When you look at 12 the cases a lot of the old ones where witnesses were 13 going to testify by telephone and you couldn't see the witness, you didn't know if there was someone sitting in 14 15 the room with the witness threatening them when they were testifying. And the cautions I've taken are these 16 17 are certified court reporting firms, the witnesses have 18 the exhibits, there will be no one in the room with them 19 other than a technical person, if necessary, it's on a 20 court secured system, and it's being -- the court and 2.1 the parties can view the witnesses. 22 THE COURT: As things stand at this point 23 would you just list the witnesses you expect to appear 24 by videoconferencing. 25 MR. TRENTADUE: Yes, sir. Mr. Hardy has

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been served with a subpoena. He's scheduled for July 30, 2014, at 8:30 a.m. our time. Ms. Wyer's asked for -- and it's in Alexandria, which is within 10 miles or 15 miles of his home -- she's asked if we can move that to Winchester. And I'll see what I can do, and if it can be done, we will do that, because there are only certain places the court reporters have a teleconferencing center. There will be Ms. Coverdale, Mr. Cooley, and Mr. Browning, who are in the Oklahoma City. problem I have, Your Honor, and I wanted to discuss this with the court today, I know Ms. Wyer doesn't know exactly when her case is going to end, but the difficulty with videoconferencing witnesses is you reserve blocks of time, you just can't walk out in the hall and bring them in. And I propose, and it might require interrupting Ms. Wyer's case, but either 10:00 a.m. on July 29th or 12:30 p.m. I could finish those witnesses within two hours I think. And then, if the court allows, it would be Mr. John Matthews at 1:00 p.m. on July 30th. He would be my last witness. THE COURT: All right. Ms. Wyer, do you 23 have any response? MS. WYER: Your Honor, I would just note that I didn't find any support for the idea that the

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costs to the plaintiff is a factor that would qualify as compelling circumstances, and that is the only factor that the plaintiff has offered. We don't even know whether these witnesses would be willing to come or not. So I would assume -- I would have to assume that they would be willing to come if their costs were covered, so the only factor that we know about is the costs to the plaintiff of bringing them. In regard to Mr. Matthews, the plaintiff has cited concerns about his safety and has thus refused to identify the location where he would testify from. FBI objects to not being informed or provided with that information. And in regard to the timing, the FBI is planning to have two -- at least two witnesses the morning of the 29th, and we're trying to arrange that so that they can testify and then return to Washington, D.C. on that day. So we would want them to go first before any videoconferencing that the plaintiff does.

And at this point I really don't know how long the case

would take when you take into account cross-examination.

It could go through the first two days, and then in that

23 case I would -- I don't see why the plaintiff's

24 witnesses couldn't be left to the 30th.

THE COURT: Let me respond. First of all,

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as to the United States' objections, I read the Tenth Circuit case that the FBI cited, and I believe the important points in that case are that the question of appearance at a video or teleconferencing by remote appearance is largely left to the judgment of the court in terms of administering the evidence. The standard is an abuse of discretion, and in that case, the court, Tenth Circuit, upheld the district court in deciding that he was not going to allow the witnesses to appear remotely. I think that there are some significant differences between that case and this case that makes the remote appearance in this case appropriate. First of all, one of the most important rationales given by the Tenth Circuit in that case was the fact that there were alternative means to produce the testimony, referring to the fact that depositions could be taken and the testimony presented by depositions. In this particular case, because of the unique procedural status of the case, there is no discovery, there is no alternative for the plaintiff to present these witnesses by deposition, video or otherwise. Second, given the nature of this case, I believe that there is good cause, because of the lack of

the ability to produce the witnesses, either compel

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their attendance or to secure their attendance by video deposition for them to appear remotely.

With respect to the Texas witnesses, I find that the burden of cost, given the limited time that they would be required to appear and the nature of this case, makes it appropriate and that there is good cause for them to appear remotely and that there will be no prejudice and that there will be adequate safeguards in place to assure that there's the opportunity for cross-examination and no tampering with the witnesses.

With respect to Mr. Hardy, he is under deposition to appear -- excuse me, under subpoena to appear remotely. I believe that that is appropriate.

The United States has refused to produce him voluntarily, even though he has previously provided six declarations in connection with this case, and I believe that there is good cause and that it is appropriate under Rule 43(a), and the objection of the United States is overruled.

As to the timing, this is a bench trial, the presentation of evidence can, under these circumstances, easily be interrupted to accommodate the need for video depositions. If the United States wants to discuss with Mr. Trentadue a time that they believe would fit in their schedule, and if he's able to arrange alternative

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times, the court would of course allow that. plaintiff, Mr. Trentadue, is unable to accommodate that in terms of arrangements, either with videoconferencing facilities or with the witnesses, then I will allow the testimony to be interrupted and we will proceed on the schedule that Mr. Trentadue has proposed. I think that resolves that issue. And of course the United States' objection is recognized and you have preserved that for the record. MS. WYER: Your Honor, our witnesses who are coming from Washington, D.C. I think their schedule should take precedence over the plaintiff's videoconferencing schedule, and they have -- also have logistical limitations on their appearances. THE COURT: If you can work that out with Mr. Trentadue to adjust to a different schedule, I'll honor that. If you're unable to work it out, we'll proceed on Mr. Trentadue's schedule. The United States has significantly greater flexibility and resources to deal with these issues than the plaintiff does in this case, and I do not intend to give their testimony priority in terms of the order of presentation. MR. TRENTADUE: Your Honor, there's also a matter of my motion included in the response to take Mr. Matthews.

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THE COURT: Mr. Matthews will be included and allowed to testify also remotely. Now, having those two items been discussed and resolved, are there additional items that we should discuss before trial, additional issues to be resolved? MR. TRENTADUE: Yes, Your Honor. I guess it would be the question, and I don't know if it's -- is how -- and it's so confusing because this being -- and, again, it may be my poor research and skill -- and this may be the first FOIA case ever going to trial. And one of the issues I think the court has to address and address fairly soon is what is the nature of these proceedings. Is it a typical civil trial or does it fall within that catchall provision under rule of evidence 1101(d) which says the rules of evidence do not apply to these proceedings, and it goes on to say miscellaneous proceedings such as. And it doesn't list -- doesn't say miscellaneous proceedings, it says such as, and then it lists extraditions or renditions, warrants, seizures, summonses and etcetera. And I believe and would respectfully suggest to the court that this is more like a probable cause proceeding for the issuance of a warrant. And when you look at how the cases -- and there are not very many that have interpreted that provision. There was one case that we

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cited to the court where it was whether to try a juvenile as an adult, and the court said, based on 1101 it was most analogous to a preliminary hearing and, therefore, suspended the full application of the rules of evidence. And in the second case it was a forfeiture of property, and they don't really explain why, they just reduced the standard to allow in hearsay evidence and then they -- and I think that's because that's analogous to a seizure. I don't think this proceeding is analogous to a typical civil trial. It is something basically unheard of. And for that, while we would suggest that under 1101 the rules of evidence should be suspended, especially since it's a bench trial and especially since to do so would comport with Rule 1102, which says these rules should be construed so as to administer every proceeding fairly and eliminate unjustifiable expense and delay and promote the development of evidence law to the end of ascertaining the truth and securing a just determination. I think that falls squarely in what I'm requesting within the spirit and the purpose of the Federal Rules of Evidence. THE COURT: Ms. Wyer, what's the position of the FBI? MS. WYER: Your Honor, this is a civil

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proceeding that is covered by 1101(b) which specifically mentions civil cases and proceedings. The normal adversary process is going to occur here. The issue to be decided is the ultimate issue in the case, and that distinguishes the situation here from any of the situations in 1101(d). And as you know, FOIA cases are normally handled through summary judgment where the rules of evidence do apply. There's no reason to suddenly suspend the rules of evidence now that the court has decided there's a dispute of material fact and we need to resolve those facts at trial.

To go to the cases, the court invited the plaintiff to submit additional briefing on this issue, and he did not do so. I assume that that would resolve the issue. But the cases that the plaintiff cited in the footnote, as he mentioned, one of them involved a juvenile transfer proceeding. That is a preliminary proceeding in a criminal case that simply decides where the proceeding is going to take place.

In the forfeiture context there is a statute that governs forfeiture proceedings that requires the government to make a preliminary showing of probable cause. This is discussed in the case cited in the case that the plaintiffs cited, and the case that discusses this is *United States v. One 56-foot Motor Yacht*, 702

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F.2d 1276, Ninth Circuit, 1983. It explains that the probable cause determination is required by statute, it's a preliminary determination in the case. If we were talking about the ultimate issue in the case, the rules of evidence would apply. This is just a burden-shifting trigger, and that's why the court made that determination there.

If you look at 1101(d)(3) and the types of proceedings that it mentions, extradition or rendition, issuing an arrest warrant, criminal summons or search warrant, a preliminary examination in a criminal case, sentencing, granting or revoking probation, considering whether to release on bail, those are extremely far removed from the typical civil case as the case that will occur here in the FOIA context.

The court identified as the issue to be decided at trial the adequacy of the FBI search, which is the only issue that remains in the case and will be the ultimate issue that will resolve judgment either in favor of the government or in favor of the plaintiff.

This is the final proceeding that is going to occur, and there is no reason to distinguish this from any other civil context. So the FBI's position is that the Federal Rules of Evidence apply here.

THE COURT: Anything further, Mr. Trentadue?

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MR. TRENTADUE: Yes, Your Honor. It is not, and I think the reasons, among others the court noted in the ruling on the videoconferencing testimony, like a normal civil proceeding, or even a normal criminal proceeding where there is discovery and ability to develop a full range of evidence. You have none of that in these proceedings in a FOIA case. I think it falls squarely under 1101(d) in that sort of miscellaneous proceeding "such as."

THE COURT: I believe that Ms. Wyer is correct, that this is a civil proceeding and that the rules of evidence do apply and should apply to the trial of this matter. I would note, however, that courts, particularly in a bench trial, have the right and enjoy the discretion to admit evidence that they believe is reliable and is appropriate for the issues that are to be preserved. The unique nature of this case I think makes it such that some of the evidence, perhaps much of the evidence that will be offered by each side will be relevant to the issue as to what information was available to the FBI in determining what the reasonable scope of the search would be. In such cases the evidence may be offered for reasons other than the truthfulness of the hearsay statements or the truthfulness of the information that's in the documents.

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But it will largely be offered for the fact that the documents exist, they could have been found, and that the information was available to the FBI in terms of developing the scope of the search and the reasonableness of the search that was carried out in light of that information. Now, if there is a specific piece of evidence that comes in that raises a question under the rules of evidence, I will address it at that time. generally I intend to apply the rules of evidence with somewhat relaxed nature given the nature of the circumstance, the nature of the proceeding, and the kind of evidence that is relevant to the ultimate determination. Any additional issues that we need to address? MS. WYER: Your Honor, the defendant had raised authenticity objections with the plaintiff and he has not responded, so -- permission to approach. THE COURT: Yes. Okay. And apparently you're raising this objection with respect to --MS. WYER: Some of plaintiff's exhibits that --THE COURT: Do you have the specific exhibits that you want to address today?

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MS. WYER: I do not have them with me. Some of them have been filed previously on the docket. of them are videotapes where it is simply not known what they are. They are not from the FBI, so we simply would need the authenticity to be established. And there's the timeline document, there's three different instances where the timeline document appears. This document has never been officially acknowledged, as far as I know, by any agency. It's not an FBI document. We do not know what it is or what -- there's no way to assess its reliability because it's simply not identified. don't know who made it, we don't know why it was made, we don't know who used it or how it was used, we don't know what reliance was placed on it at the time it was made. We simply know nothing about it, and the authenticity of that document needs to be established before it's admitted into evidence. The other exhibits are simply photographs where we simply have no information about where those photographs came from, when they were taken, or what they purport to show. So, again, we would insist that some authentication of those documents be provided before they are admitted. THE COURT: Mr. Trentadue, do you wish to respond?

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MR. TRENTADUE: Yes, Your Honor. understanding of the court's order that you had them file the objections on authenticity was to give the parties notice that there might be a foundation problem, but the ultimate ruling would occur at trial once the witnesses are put on to establish the foundation for that document, which I intend to produce witnesses to do I also understood that the court was reserving that. ruling on the objections until trial and that there was no necessity of responding to a letter saying I object to this -- exhibits. And as far as the photographs, those were included in letters to Ms. Wyer, who I explained what they were and everything else and asked questions about them and they're attached to that correspondence. The videotapes have been prepared and presented to them. They're self-explanatory too in terms of what's on the labels and what's happening. But following up in reporting to the court, the parties have exchanged exhibits in compliance with the court's order, and that was done fully in compliance with the court's order on the timeline set forth in the pretrial order. THE COURT: Given the fact that this is not a jury trial, it is less important in this case to establish before the trial begins the authenticity of

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these documents, and as I previously indicated, I will reserve ruling on them. Of course, the United States will have the ability to make any objection if there's not adequate foundation as to the authenticity of any document before it's received in evidence. But given the fact that we're going to proceed without discovery, without the opportunity to authenticate some of these documents in the usual way in a typical civil case, I will allow the plaintiff to present evidence as to the authenticity of the documents. If the government objects, I will rule on them at the time that they are -- that that evidence is presented. MS. WYER: Sorry, Your Honor, I had only raised this issue because at the end of last week's proceeding I had asked specifically about authenticity objections, and you said that you would hear them today. THE COURT: Yeah, I understand your reason for raising it, but in practicality I believe the only rational way to deal with these is to allow Mr. Trentadue to present them and use the documents with the witnesses and see if he can establish authenticity. If he can, we'll proceed in that way; if he can't, I'll hear the objections of the United States. So we will resolve those matters at trial. MR. TRENTADUE: There is one other document

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matter I would suggest, sir, is that the parties be
    required by July 23rd or 24th to submit to the court a
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    list of the exhibits to which they don't object. And I
    mean there are a number of the government's that I don't
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    have any objection to.
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                THE COURT: Yeah, to the extent you can
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    agree to that --
                MR. TRENTADUE: Yes, sir.
                THE COURT: -- that will be fine.
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    don't agree, it's going to be quite efficient in this
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    case to just rule on them as the documents are used.
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    think usually, or often, it is not an efficient use of
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    time to spend a lot of time talking about documents that
    may or may not be used at trial. So my preference and
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    practice is to deal with them when they become an issue
    at trial.
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                MR. TRENTADUE: I thought if we could agree,
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    then --
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                THE COURT: If you can agree, that's
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    perfectly fine; if you don't agree, I'll deal with those
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    objections at the time the documents are used.
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                Anything further?
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                MR. TRENTADUE: No, sir.
                MS. WYER: Yes, Your Honor. We have various
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    issues with witnesses. I wanted to inform the court
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that one of the witnesses has had a name change.
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    Karen Lanning's current name is Karen Thiessen,
    T-h-i-e-s-s-e-n. We have another of the witnesses that
    we had previously identified has had a very recent --
    two deaths in her family, and she will not be able to
    appear to testify. And so we want to bring someone else
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    to cover the same -- basically the same information, and
    her name is Monica Mitchell. She's --
                MR. TRENTADUE: I couldn't hear the name.
                           Monica Mitchell.
                MS. WYER:
                THE COURT: And the court will allow -- of
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    course, those kinds of substitutions often occur, and as
    long as you give adequate notice to Mr. Trentadue that
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    you're going to substitute the witness, that will be
    allowed.
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                MR. TRENTADUE: I have no objection.
                MS. WYER: Thank you, Your Honor.
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                We also wanted to mention that in light of
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    some of the concerns that the court has expressed and
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    some of the rulings that it has made, we are considering
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    attempting to identify and bringing to testify one or
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    more case agents from the Oklahoma City bombing
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    investigation who would address their knowledge of the
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    existence of videotapes such as plaintiff has
    identified. And because those agents are no longer --
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or seem to no longer be with the FBI, we have had difficulties in locating them and contacting them, but that is still in progress and we hope to know whether that will be possible by the end of this week. So we would ask that we be allowed to add witnesses of that nature, but if we could inform the court by Friday whether that would happen, we would be willing to do that.

THE COURT: Any objection?

MR. TRENTADUE: Yes, sir. This is the kind of information that should have been searched for and produced long ago in this case. And suddenly we're hearing at the last minute, oh, we'll bring somebody forward that says this evidence doesn't exist. An unknown person at this point in time I would object strenuously to that, Your Honor, especially since in the pretrial order, and I don't mean to misquote the pretrial order, mis-cite the pretrial order, I don't believe the government has made an issue out of the existence or nonexistence of these tapes.

MS. WYER: Your Honor, to be clear, we believe that the existence or nonexistence of the tapes is not an issue that should be required to be addressed in the FOIA context. However, given the court's -- some of the court's statements and the plaintiff's arguments,

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he is clearly making that an issue in the case, and we should be allowed to respond to that if we are able to find agents who could respond to that. THE COURT: Proceed by giving Mr. Trentadue notice of the witnesses. It seems to me that what you're talking about is in the nature of rebuttal testimony, and if at that point in the trial you believe you need to call these witnesses as rebuttal testimony, I'll hear any objections at that time, and, if necessary, if there's some kind of prejudice or surprise, I'll deal with that issue at the time. the extent -- and as soon as you can give Mr. Trentadue notice of who you would propose to call, give him that notice, and if he continues to object once he knows who the witnesses are and what their proposed testimony will be, I'll deal with it at that time. MS. WYER: Thank you, Your Honor. We were hoping to present these witnesses in our case-in-chief. Rebuttal is another issue that I was wondering about though with regard to how that would --THE COURT: Given the United States' position that the existence of the tapes is not an issue, it seems to me it's more in the nature of rebuttal testimony. I'm not sure that it matters significantly, given the nature of the way this

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proceeding is going to go forward with the court as a
bench trial, but if you want to call them, attempt to
call them as a part of your case-in-chief, again, give
Mr. Trentadue notice and I'll hear any objections at the
time you propose to sponsor the witnesses.
            MS. WYER:
                       Thank you, Your Honor.
            THE COURT: Anything further before we
recess?
            MR. TRENTADUE:
                           No, sir.
            THE COURT: Ms. Wyer?
            MS. WYER: Your Honor, I just have a few
matters. I wondered if the court has any particular
policies or preferences in a bench trial regarding
opening arguments, closing arguments, post-trial
briefing. Will there be deadlines set for post-trial
briefing and things like that?
            THE COURT: My expectation is that once
we've completed the evidence we will have a transcript,
I'll ask each side to submit post-trial briefs, and I
will make my findings and conclusions based on the
post-trial briefs. And before I do that will invite
closing arguments. The usual practice is to get your
post-trial briefs, then hear closing arguments.
unless there is a different suggestion or desire by both
parties, that's how I intend to proceed. So we'll take
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    the evidence, wait until we have a transcript, have
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    post-trial briefing, hear oral argument, then I'll make
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    the ultimate findings and conclusions. That gives you
    some quidance. And we'll talk about the timing of that
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    once we get to that point in the trial.
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                MS. WYER:
                           Thank you, Your Honor.
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                THE COURT: Anything further?
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                MR. TRENTADUE: No, sir.
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                THE COURT: Thank you. We will see you on
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            If you need assistance, if you can't work out
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    the schedule of the witnesses and you have problems --
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    we'll proceed as you've indicated, but if you need my
    assistance on some of those issues, I'll be available
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    and you can talk to me by telephone or we can schedule a
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    hearing. We will be in recess.
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                MR. TRENTADUE: Thank you, sir.
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                MS. WYER: Thank you, Your Honor.
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                 (Whereupon, the matter was concluded.)
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CERTIFICATE State of Utah County of Salt Lake I, Karen Murakami, a Certified Shorthand Reporter for the State of Utah, do hereby certify that the foregoing transcript of proceedings was taken before me at the time and place set forth herein and was taken down by me in shorthand and thereafter transcribed into typewriting under my direction and supervision; That the foregoing pages contain a true and correct transcription of my said shorthand notes so taken. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this <u>12th</u> day of <u>September</u>, 2021. Karen Murakami Karen Murakami, CSR, RPR